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GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

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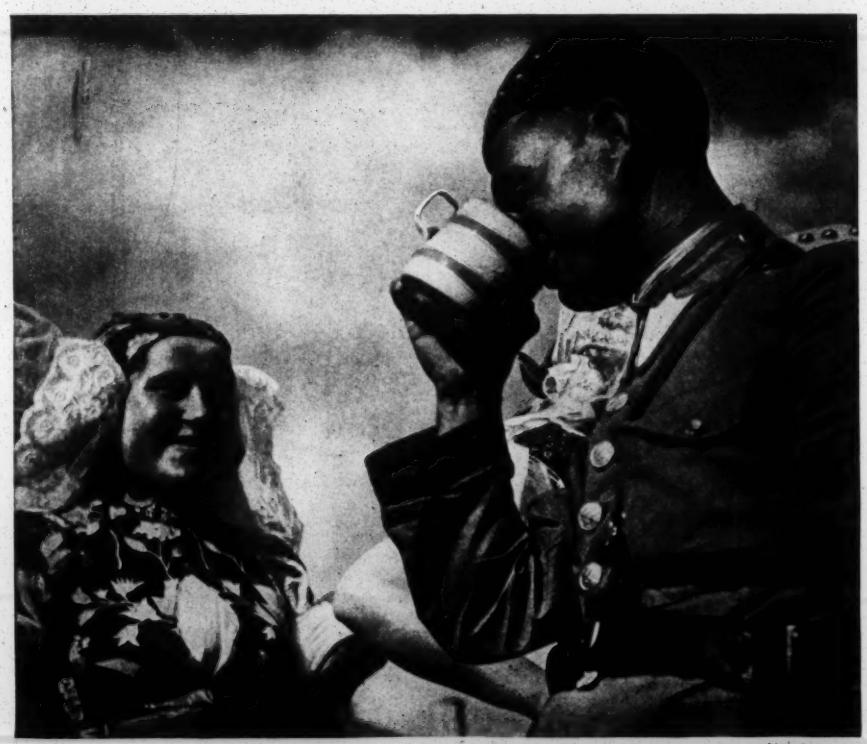
1. Czechoslovakia Starts to Revive AIKMAN MILIUS
2. Iceland, Again a Republic, Always a Nation of Peace and Toil HOOPES MILIUS
3. Budapest, Hungary's Twin Metropolis, Was Nazi Arsenal GRAVES ATWATER
4. Typhoon Is Pacific Version of Atlantic Hurricane HOOPES MILIUS
5. Geo-Graphic Brevities: South Sea Bee—Walcheren Island ATWATER KERBEY MURPHY



Jiri Jenicek

NOW THAT THEIR SOLDIERS MARCH AGAIN, THE CZECHOSLOVAKS CAN SMILE

Czechoslovak soldiers, who did not have a chance to fight for their country in 1938-39, have since been active on all western fronts. In 1940 some of their units resisted the German invasion of France; this year they took part in the uprising that freed Paris. Czechoslovak fliers from British bases helped defend England in the Battle of Britain. Other fighting men from Czechoslovakia served in North Africa. Czechoslovak brigades are with the Allies now in the Netherlands. Other refugee army units fought on the Russian front and advanced with the Soviet Union's forces over the Carpathians to Czechoslovak soil, where they are now pushing the liberation of their country (Bulletin No. 1).

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GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETIN

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic School Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers in the United States and its possessions for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (stamps or money order); in Canada, 50 cents. Originally entered as second-class matter January 27, 1922; re-entered as of April 27, 1943, Post Office, Washington, D. C., under Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1944, by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C. International copyright secured. All rights reserved. Quedan reservados todos los derechos.

Czechoslovakia Starts to Revive

CZECHOSLOVAK forces are fighting in the mountainous east of their country, along with Russian armies, to restore their nation to independence.

Liberation of Czechoslovakia will put back into place "the centerpiece of Europe." Both Bismarck and Napoleon held that the country was a key to domination of the continent. The partitioning of Czechoslovakia among the Axis countries was the beginning of Nazi advances into Europe's east.

Four divisions made up the Czechoslovak nation—Bohemia, the westernmost, then Moravia-Silesia, Slovakia, and the Carpatho-Ukraine (or Ruthenia).

A Barrier to Nazi Expansion

The Republic of Czechoslovakia was created by the Treaty of Versailles after World War I from territories chiefly from the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. Less than one-fourth of one per cent of this land had ever belonged to Germany—122 square miles cut from German Silesia.

The new nation, shaped roughly like a giant lizard, stretched some 600 miles across central Europe from west to east. It was surrounded by five countries—Germany, Poland, Romania, Hungary, and Austria.

By 1930 Czechoslovakia had nearly fifteen million people, mainly Czechs and Slovaks. There were large minority groups of Germans, Hungarians, and Poles.

This was the land that blocked the path of Nazi eastward expansion in 1938. In the fall of that year, however, the Munich agreement between Germany, Italy, Britain and France brought about the cession to Germany of Czechoslovakia's Sudeten area. This frontier strip around the western provinces took from the nation a fifth of its territory and about one-fourth of its people. With the territory went also Czechoslovakia's border fortifications.

In the spring of 1939 German troops marched into what remained of the defenseless western provinces. The Nazis set up at Praha (Prag), the capital, the Reich protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia. At the same time they sponsored the puppet state of Slovakia to the east.

Meanwhile Hungary had occupied the Carpatho-Ukraine and a part of southeast Slovakia. Poland had seized the minerals-rich Teschen district in the north.

Chief Industries in Western Provinces

The refugee government of Czechoslovakia, in planning to free and rebuild the nation, is able to count on a wealth of resources. The country has valuable minerals—coal, iron, copper, lead, silver, radium ores, and gold. It has fine timber (illustration, next page) and fertile farm land.

The nation had built up extensive industries before the Germans seized the country. Industrial districts were in Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia, which had been the manufacturing sections of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These provinces were densely populated, about 350 people per square mile.

Prewar factories turned out quality products known around the world. Glassware, fine porcelain, beer, textiles, shoes, machinery, and munitions were foremost. In Bohemia at Plzeň (Pilsen) was the huge armament plant of the Skoda Company, one of the leading munitions makers of Europe. In Moravia at Brno (Brünn) the famous Bren machine guns were made.

Agricultural Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine were sparsely settled. It was

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Royal Dutch Air Service

ON WALCHEREN ISLAND NATURE AND THE NETHERLANDERS JOINED TO BUILD DEFENSES AGAINST THE INVADING SEA

Before the Germans took Walcheren Island, the Netherlands' older enemy—the sea—was constantly attacking this guardian of the Schelde estuary. Both nature and the Netherlanders fought back. Pushed up by winds and tides, this ridge of sand dunes (left) forms a natural dike along the southwest shore of the island between Westkapelle and Flushing. The landward slope of the ridge drops steeply to the below-sea-level plain of the island. Anchoring grass grows thicker on this sheltered side. To defend the dune-dike, the Netherlanders built a double fence of close-set posts (center) parallel with it. Long jetties of posts project into the sea to break the force of the waves and reinforce the protection of the sea fence. It was at Westkapelle that British Marine Commandos made the first landing on the island whose capture removed the last Nazi threat to the sea lane to Antwerp (Bulletin No. 5).

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Iceland, Again a Republic, Always a Nation of Peace and Toil

WHEN "Konungsrikid Ísland" became "Lydveldid Ísland" it wasn't a change of name but a change of government.

"Ísland" is the Icelander's spelling for the name of his homeland. Those phrases indicate that the Kingdom of Iceland became the Republic of Iceland.

The world's oldest parliament, sitting in Iceland's capital at Reykjavik, adopted a new constitution for the island nation on June 17, 1944. This act created the newest—and smallest in population—of the world's democracies.

Has Only One-Tenth as Many People as Cleveland

Iceland, 39,700 square miles in area, is about as large as Ohio or Virginia. Its inhabitants (more than 120,000) match one-tenth the population of metropolitan Cleveland. Touching the Arctic Circle in the far North Atlantic, it is known as a land of frost and fire because of its vast snowfields and glaciers mixed with a hundred volcanoes, its lava streams, hot springs, and its geysers.

Yielding a livelihood only to toilers, Iceland is a nation of hardy fishermen and farmers. Refrigerator ships have in recent years expanded the world market for Iceland's herring and cod. Farmers herd sheep, raise hay and potatoes on volcanic soil, and have greenhouses heated by water from hot springs.

One-third of Iceland's people live in modern Reykjavik on the southwestern coast, where the Atlantic's Gulf Stream helps to keep midwinter almost as mild as it is in New York. Water at 170 degrees, piped from hot springs ten miles away, supplies heat to Reykjavik's houses.

The city is the center of Iceland's ancient and renowned culture. It has a university, a broadcasting station, six daily newspapers, and scores of book and magazine publishing houses.

The Icelanders' language has remained almost unchanged for a thousand years. Three-fourths of the people speak two languages. Music, art, and drama are encouraged and supported by the State. Fines for breaking prohibition laws boost the Cultural Fund.

Defied Kings to Set up Pioneer Republic

Iceland seems strange to American soldiers stationed there. It has no trees taller than a man, no army, no navy, no railroads, no night in mid-June. But Iceland's ideals—peace, independence, education, and work for all—are America's ideals.

The same search for freedom which later brought colonists to North America prompted Norwegians to flee royal oppression and settle on Iceland's west coast 1,070 years ago, in 874 A.D. Today's inhabitants are descended from those Vikings and from Irish, Danish, Scottish, and English settlers.

They were free. In 930 they set up their pioneer republic and its parliament, the Althing (illustration, next page). In the year 1000, while an Icelander, Leif Ericson, was discovering America, the Althing adopted Christianity and all the citizens were baptized.

After three centuries of freedom Iceland fell under foreign rule: first, Norway, in 1262, then Denmark, in 1380. Emigration to America followed the nation's darkest hour in 1783, when unprecedented volcanic damage capped a long era of plagues, famines, and raids by sea rovers.

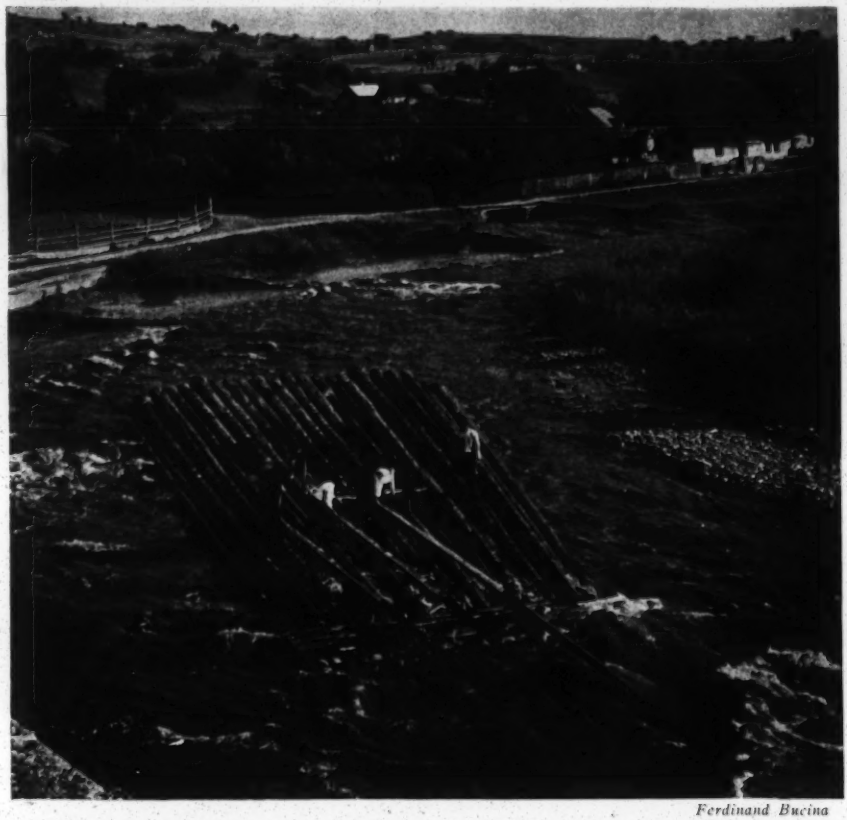
in Slovakia recently that the general revolt against the Nazis broke out. This is a rugged region of farms and pastures, forests and streams. In the fertile southern lowlands, where the Hungarians seized territory, there are vineyards and fields of grain, sugar beets, and tobacco.

Less than 100 miles from the frontier of the Soviet Union's Ukraine, the Carpatho-Ukraine is populated chiefly by Slavs related to their neighbors in the U.S.S.R. It is a primitive mountainous region. Normally most of the people make a meager living by raising cattle and sheep, hunting wild boar, cultivating small hillside farms, and mining the extensive rock salt deposits.

Note: Czechoslovakia appears on the new Map of the U.S.S.R. and adjoining areas, just issued as a wall map supplement to the *National Geographic Magazine* for December, 1944. A price list of maps will be sent from the Society's Washington headquarters on request.

For further information, see "Czechoslovaks, Yankees of Europe," in the *National Geographic Magazine*, August, 1938*; and "When Czechoslovakia Puts a Falcon Feather in Its Cap," January, 1933*. *(Issues marked with an asterisk are included in a special list of Magazines available to teachers in lots of ten for $1. A copy of the list may be obtained from the Society's headquarters, Washington 6, D. C.)*

Bulletin No. 1, November 27, 1944.



Ferdinand Bucina

ARMIES ARE FORDING STREAMS THAT FLOATED PEACETIME TIMBER RAFTS

The liberation of Czechoslovakia has been progressing from the mountains of the northeast. The mountain streams, in spite of their rapids, were channels for carrying the timber down to steam sawmills. Skillful Czechoslovak lumberjacks had a technique of guiding their timber rafts through the rapids with oar sweeps pushed out in front; American raftsmen usually drag oar sweeps astern. This raft, photographed before the war, was shooting the rapids on the Bila (White) Tisa, which joins the Cerna (Black) Tisa to form one of the Danube's main tributaries.

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Budapest, Hungary's Twin Metropolis, Was Nazi Arsenal

BUDAPEST, way station on the Soviet advance toward Germany, is the guardian of the great plains of Hungary as well as its capital and commercial metropolis.

The city stands at a natural gateway to central Europe from the east. In advancing against it, the Russians followed the trail of westward-pushing prehistoric tribes, and Tatars and Turks of a later era.

At the crossroads of Europe, Budapest has known the terrors and destruction of repeated invasions. In spite of its thousand years of history the city is modern in both spirit and architecture. Almost completely destroyed by the Turks, the capital has few important buildings more than 200 years old.

Hungary's Last King Was Crowned in the Capital's First Church

Extending along both banks of the Danube, Budapest is made up of the cities of Buda and Pest, which combined in 1873. Buda rises on the hilly right bank of the river. It is dominated by Gellért Hill, reaching to 395 feet above the Danube (illustration, next page), and the lower Vár (Fortress) Hill.

On the Vár rose the Coronation Church, the city's oldest building. It was founded in 1015 by Hungary's first king and patron saint, the Christian King Stephen. It was used as a mosque during the century and a half of Turkish domination. Hungary's last king, Charles IV, was crowned there in 1916.

At the south end of the Vár Maria Theresa built a palace in the 18th century on the remains of 13th century fortifications.

Across the Danube on a low plain lies Pest, the capital's other half. Larger and more densely built up than its hilly twin, Pest includes the city's business district and government buildings, with industrial areas in its outskirts.

Beside the Danube in Pest stood Hungary's Parliament House. This limestone Gothic-style structure, covering more than four acres, was finished in 1902. Other buildings equally as recent were the opera house and two museums.

Budapest Became an Arsenal under the Nazis

Before the war Budapest's residents so enjoyed eating in the open air that on summer nights even the colonnade of the Parliament House became a cafe. Bordering the river, south from the Parliament House, extended the Franz Joseph Quay. Along the top of this wharf stretched a tree-shaded promenade bordered by hotels and sidewalk cafes. Hidden beneath were the docks which served the city's busy river traffic.

Central Europe's peacetime commerce flowed up and down the Danube in a steady stream. Fourteen railways converged at Budapest. Highways spread toward Austria, Germany, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Pest, the commercial half of the capital, had the river port. In prewar days river boats took on cargoes of cattle, wheat, and corn brought to the city from fertile Hungarian plains. Passengers boarded steamers for Vienna and other continental points.

The Nazis transformed Hungary's peacetime industrial capital into a wartime arsenal. They took control of its electrical works—among the largest in Europe; its grain elevators and flour mills; its chemical, firearms, and shoe factories; its shipbuilding yards and textile mills. And they added a Messerschmitt aircraft plant, numerous machine works, and an airfield. They started a steady stream of

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The turn came in the 19th century. On June 17, 1811, the patriot leader Jón Sigurdsson was born. Partial freedom was won in Sigurdsson's lifetime. The King of Denmark gave Iceland a constitution of its own on the 1,000th anniversary of settlement, in 1874. Later, the Icelandic-Danish Act of Union in December, 1918, made Iceland a free and independent kingdom, united to Denmark only by a personal tie—the King of Denmark was also King of Iceland.

On April 10, 1940, Germany invaded Denmark. Iceland's Althing acted at once in the emergency to transfer royal power from the captive king to the Icelandic Cabinet.

In May, 1941, a resolution of the Althing proclaimed Iceland's intention not to renew the 1918 Act of Union. A second resolution stated the plan to become a republic. These decisions were supported in the four-day plebiscite of May 20-23, 1944. Almost 97 per cent voted for a republic.

Note: Iceland may be located on the Society's Map of North America.

For further information, see "Ancient Iceland, New Pawn of War," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for July, 1941*, and "A Walking Tour across Iceland," April, 1928*.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS: "Where Are the Yanks? 12. Iceland," May 15, 1944; and "Iceland, Isle of Frost and Fire, Joins Defense Line-Up," October 6, 1941.

Bulletin No. 2, November 27, 1944.

Roger Nielsen

PICNIC PARTIES TROT ALONG ICELAND'S ROCKY ROAD TO SELF-GOVERNMENT

The highway from Reykjavik to Thingvellir is Iceland's "road to self-government," for the plain of Thingvellir was the outdoor meeting place of history's pioneer parliament. Icelanders on ponies and sightseeing American soldiers in buses travel the winding road over barren lava mountains down to the historic treeless plain. It was 846 years before the Liberty Bell rang in the United States that Icelanders started their "grandmother of parliaments." For two weeks in summer of each year all the island's free men met to make their laws; this outdoor gathering was called the Althing, or "All-Assembly." They camped on the grassy moor of Thingvellir, the "Assembly-Field." Daily they clustered around the Lögberg ("Law-Mount"), a hill whose rocks made a natural sounding board, where the elected Law-Speaker presided. Lacking written records, Icelanders depended on the Law-Speaker to memorize and proclaim both old laws and new amendments. From 930 until 1798 the Althing met at Thingvellir. After a 50-year suspension, the parliament transferred to Reykjavik, the capital.

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Typhoon Is Pacific Version of Atlantic Hurricane

"PLENTY of rain and blow—but just an average typhoon." This sums up the scientists' reaction to the tropical storms that recently raged across Leyte Island, handicapping American soldiers in the Philippines.

The typhoon is one of the strange weather hazards that American fighting men are encountering abroad. But on close inspection this violent storm turns out to be simply a hurricane under a Chinese name.

Different Waters, Different Names, Same Cause

"Tropical cyclone" is the general scientific name for all big rotating storms arising in warm seas around the world. They are known, however, by various local names, according to where they blow.

In the western Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico, they are called hurricanes (illustration, next page). The same name applies in the South Pacific, although Australians sometimes call them willy-willies. In waters adjoining India, where they are twice as frequent as in the Atlantic, they are simply labeled cyclones.

In the western Pacific and the China seas, where about 24 of some violence occur during each June-to-October season, the tropical cyclone is called a typhoon, from the Chinese words *tai fung* for "great wind." Within this area are the Philippines, where the typhoon has also a local name—the baguio.

Doughnut-Shaped Storm Blows along a Path

By any name, the tropical cyclone rises in the doldrums of the warm open ocean near the Equator, where it becomes a vast doughnut of whirling air with a rainless hole of comparative calm at its center. Cool air from above, mixing with warm moist air rising from the sea, picks up a spinning motion from the earth's eastward rotation. North of the Equator such storms always spin counterclockwise; south of the Equator, clockwise.

They may start with no more than a 50-mile diameter and a center only five miles wide. When fully developed, a big cyclone may be 900 miles in diameter with a 30-mile center. It affects the atmosphere for 1,800 miles.

Leyte's recent typhoons blew 75-mile winds. The worst storms sometimes double this velocity. In addition to their circular whirl, tropical cyclones move along a path in their entirety. They go slowly at first, and usually no more than 20 miles an hour. Some, however, travel 40 miles or more per hour.

To one directly in the tropical cyclone's path, the circular pattern of the storm is not apparent. He first shelters himself from wind and rain coming from one direction, then briefly sees calm and even sunshine. But soon he must protect himself from the driving wind and rain of the other side of the doughnut, blowing in the opposite direction.

Tropical cyclones are usually at their strongest between latitudes 10° and 20°, north and south. The record books are full, however, of accounts of storms passing well north of this range, such as the Japanese typhoon of 1934 and the New England hurricane of 1938. Both originated in equatorial seas. Both did damage amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars.

Note: See also "Weather Fights and Works for Man," in the December, 1943, issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*.

Bulletin No. 4, November 27, 1944 (over).

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war supplies moving across the Danube bridges toward Germany.

Before the war nearly one-sixth of Hungary's 9,000,000 people lived in Budapest—Magyars, Slavs, Germans, and Jews.

Peacetime Budapest in its fashionable districts was one of the most beautiful and light-hearted cities in Europe. Gardens and parks, broad boulevards and river promenades flanked by luxurious hotels, the festivals and parades attracted thousands of visitors. Gypsy orchestras played in countless cafes along the Danube. The city rivalled Paris with its sparkling night life and gay open-air cafes.

Budapest's medicinal springs have been famous ever since the Romans founded Aquincum (Buda). Outdoor bathing was a fashionable institution in the city.

Budapest built the world's first subway. A chain of small white cars, the grandparent of subway trains, traveled a two-and-a-quarter-mile route.

Note: Budapest is shown on the Society's Map of Europe and the Near East.

For additional information about Budapest and the surrounding country, see "Magyar Mirth and Melancholy," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for January, 1938*; and "Hungary, a Kingdom Without a King," and "Budapest, Twin City of the Danube," June, 1932*.

Bulletin No. 3, November 27, 1944.

Rudolf Balogh

BUDAPEST'S PEACETIME LIGHTS PALED THE DANUBE'S NIGHTTIME BLACKNESS

The semicircular colonnade (left foreground) on the Gellért Hill curves around a statue of the 11th century martyred bishop for whom the hill was named. From this hill, the highest in Buda, the view reveals the Danube and Pest on the flat plain beyond. Even in peacetime Budapest's blue Danube was brown in the daylight, and black at night except where lines of lights threw pale reflections across its surface. It was never blue. Beyond the buildings (center) on the Buda bank, the Széchenyi Suspension Bridge casts parallel streaks of light from shore to shore. This first bridge to connect Buda and Pest was built a century ago when they were still separate cities. Beyond the bridge (right background) on the Pest side of the river rises the spire-encircled dome of the Parliament House. Farther upstream are the arches of the Margaret Bridge, described in recent news stories as having been blown up.

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Geo-Graphic Brevities

GI Joe's Gun Goes "Buzz" Instead of "Bang"

GI JOE is having bee trouble in the South Pacific.

No, the difficulty is not what you may think it is. The catch is that when he pulls the trigger of his rifle, out may come a bee instead of a bullet.

Nature is handing the Yank plenty of surprises on many of the out-of-the-way islands of the Pacific, but a bee that spikes his gun probably tops the list.

The South Sea bee which has made itself a military problem is the *magacolide*, a leaf-cutting insect which builds its house in small holes. The barrel of a 30-calibre rifle gives it a perfect setup. Into the dark tunnel the bee dives with bits of leaves from which, part way down, it constructs its home. The leaf bits are cut to a regular pattern, coming in just two sizes.

Yanks in the South Seas do not leave their rifles lying around to become bees' barracks. But the *magacolide* is a fast worker and begins its job hot on the trail of the oil swab.

The Smithsonian Institution in Washington has recently received a specimen of the *magacolide* whose military career is finished. This saboteur bee is black with cross bands formed by white hairs. It is about a half-inch long.

The exact location of "the Island of Gun-Spiking Bees" is still shrouded in military secrecy.

Note: For information about other strange insects and animals which Yanks meet in the Pacific, see "What the Fighting Yanks See," in the October, 1944, issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*.

* * * * *

Walcheren Island, Sentinel of the Schelde Estuary

WALCHEREN Island, from which Allied armies have cleared the last Nazi obstacle on the waterway to Antwerp, is the southwesternmost island of the Netherlands. It forms the north side of the Schelde estuary entrance up which ships must move to Antwerp, Belgium. It was a launching area for German V-2 rocket bombs.

Walcheren is part of the province of Zeeland. It is a low-lying, roundish island about nine miles across, normally protected by dikes (illustration, inside cover) and drained by pumps. Nazi damage includes partial flooding.

Flushing (Vlissingen), at the southern tip of the island, was Walcheren's largest city before the war, with a population of 22,554. It was a commercial and naval port and a popular bathing resort.

A railroad connected it with the mainland through Middelburg, over a causeway extending eastward across South Beveland Island. In peacetime, steamers ran between Flushing and the British port of Harwich, 100 miles across the North Sea.

Middelburg, capital of Zeeland, had about 19,000 residents before the war (illustration, next page). The city was laid out like an archery target. The oldest section is the bull's-eye, lying within a circle of continuous streets. Around this core curves a narrow canal. Beyond the canal a moat encircles the city. Along the east side of the city, the Walcheren Canal cuts across the island from Flushing to Veere on the northeast coast.

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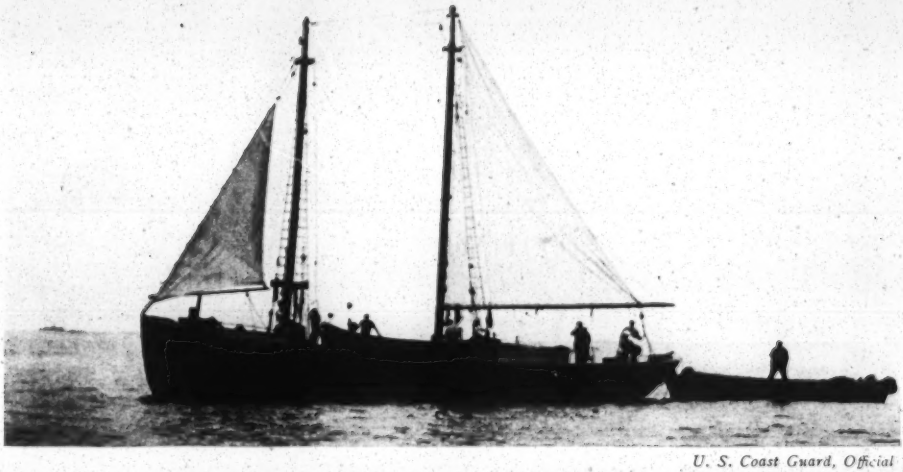

U. S. Coast Guard, Official

WARNING FROM THE AIR TELLS OF DANGER FROM THE AIR

On the average, four hurricanes come tearing westward and then northward through the western Atlantic region north of the Equator each year between June and October. When one is approaching, the Coast Guard sends a plane along the coast to warn small fishing vessels that lack radios. The plane drops a cloth pennant (left) labeled "Hurricane Warning" attached to a wooden block which will float (inset, upper right).

Middelburg was a typical Netherlands town, clean and quiet, with high-gabled houses of brick. Bicycles were numerous. Along two sides of the central square were the red brick buildings of a 12th century abbey, used for the offices of the provincial government. The abbey church's octagonal tower, more than 280 feet high, had a chime of 41 bells. Restoration after several disastrous fires had left little of the original structures.

Walcheren had small shipyards, textile mills, breweries, orchards, and hemp fields. Westkapelle Dike on the western side of the island, one of the largest Netherlands sea dikes, protected much sub-sea-level meadowland.

Note: Walcheren Island may be found on the Society's Map of Germany and Its Approaches.

For further information about the Netherlands, see "Behind Netherlands Sea Ramparts," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for February, 1940*; and "Vacation in Holland," September, 1929*; and these GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS: "The Netherlands a Water-Ruled Vestibule to Germany," October 9, 1944; and "Cities of Southern Netherlands Combine History and Industry," November 20, 1944.

Bulletin No. 5, November 27, 1944.

Ewing Galloway

MOTHER-AND-DAUGHTER COSTUMES GO TO MARKET IN MIDDELBURG

In Middelburg and other towns on Walcheren Island before the war, it was quite usual to see the distinctive costumes which are fast disappearing in other parts of the Netherlands. Like up-to-date Americans, the Walcheren islanders have long had mother-and-daughter duplicate costumes. Setting out for market in Middelburg, this very junior miss wears a gaily striped and dotted kerchief, folded like her mother's plaid one, and a full skirt, ankle length. A long gathered apron repeats the pattern of her mother's. Except for her ornate cap this child is a miniature of mother. Father smiles with pride in his full-size and pocket-size editions.